

STATUS OF THE CLAIMS

1-48. (Cancelled)

49. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 43, wherein said infectious diseases are viral, mycotic or bacterial diseases.

50-60. (Cancelled)

61. (Currently amended) A method for the ex vivo activation of NK- cells, comprising: contacting NK cells in physiological suspension with an isolated and uncomplexed protein; or protein fragment; ~~or polypeptide~~ selected from the group consisting of a Hsp70 protein of SEQ ID NO.: 1; and a C-terminal fragment of Hsp70, wherein said fragment comprises amino acids 384-641 of SEQ ID NO.: 1, ~~and a polypeptide having 70% or greater homology to amino acids 384-641 of SEQ ID NO.: 1~~, wherein said isolated protein; or fragment, ~~or polypeptide~~ induce an immune response by NK cells, and further said response increases cytolytic activity of the NK cells or stimulates proliferation of the NK cells.

62. (Previously presented) The method of claim 61, wherein said activation of said cells further comprises stimulation of proliferation and/or an increase in cytotoxicity.

63. (Previously presented) The method of claim 61, wherein said physiological suspension containing NK cells comprises a peripheral mononuclear blood cell fraction or fractions thereof.

64. (Previously presented) The method of claim 61, wherein said suspension further comprises cells expressing cell-surface Hsp70.

65. (Previously presented) The method of claim 64, wherein said expressing cells comprise diseased cells from a patient.

66. (Previously presented) The method of claim 65, wherein said diseased cells are selected from the group consisting of leukemia cells, lymphoma cells, tumor cells, metastasizing cells of solid tumors and cells from a virally, mycotically and/or bacterially infected patient.
67. (Previously presented) The method of any one of Claims 61-66, wherein said contacting is carried out for at least 3 hours.
68. (Previously presented) The method of claim 67, wherein said contacting is carried out for 4 days.
69. (currently amended) The method of claim 67, wherein ~~said conditions~~ said contacting further comprise addition of cytokine.
70. (Previously presented) The method of claim 69, wherein the cytokine is an interleukin.
71. (Previously presented) The method of claim 70, wherein said interleukin is selected from the group consisting of IL-2, IL-12 and IL-15.
72. (Currently amended) A method for the in vivo activation of the immune system in a patient in need thereof comprising:
- i) administering to said patient a pharmaceutically effective amount of NK cells obtained by the method of claim 61; and
 - ii) optionally administering to said patient, concurrently or subsequently, a pharmaceutically effective amount of an isolated and uncomplexed protein; or protein fragment; ~~or polypeptide~~ selected from the group consisting of a Hsp70 protein of SEQ ID NO: 1; and a C-terminal fragment of Hsp70, wherein said fragment comprises amino acids 384-641 of SEQ ID NO.: 1; ~~and a polypeptide having 70% or greater homology to amino acids 384-641 of SEQ ID NO.: 1,~~ wherein said isolated protein; or

fragment, ~~or polypeptide~~ induces an immune response by NK cells, and wherein said response increases cytolytic activity of the NK cells or stimulates proliferation of the NK cells.

73. (Previously presented) The method of claim 72, where said patient is suffering from a disease selected from the group consisting if cancerous, infectious and autoimmune disease.

74. (Previously presented) The method of claim 72, further comprising administering a cytokine.

75. (Previously presented) The method of claim 74, wherein said cytokine is an interleukin.

76. (Previously presented) The method of claim 75, wherein said interleukin is selected from the group consisting of IL-2, IL-12 and IL-15.

77. (Previously presented) The method of claim 73, wherein said cancerous disease is selected from the group consisting of tumors, solid tumors, metastatic tumors, leukemias and lymphomas.

78-82. (Canceled).

83. (Currently amended) A method for in vivo activation of the immune system in a patient in need thereof comprising administering to said patient a pharmaceutically effective amount of an isolated and uncomplexed protein; or protein fragment, ~~or polypeptide~~ selected from the group consisting of a Hsp70 protein of SEQ ID NO.:1; and a C-terminal fragment of Hsp70, wherein said fragment comprises amino acids 384-641 of SEQ ID NO.: 1, ~~and a polypeptide having 70% or greater homology to amino acids 384-641 of SEQ ID NO.: 1~~; wherein said isolated protein; or fragment, ~~or polypeptide~~ induces an immune response by NK cells, and

wherein said response increases cytolytic activity of the NK cells or stimulates proliferation of the NK cells.

84. (Previously presented) The method of claim 83, where said patient is suffering from a disease selected from the group consisting of cancerous, infectious and autoimmune disease.

85. (Previously presented) The method of claim 83, further comprising administering a cytokine.

86. (Previously presented) The method of claim 85, wherein said cytokine is an interleukin.

87. (Previously presented) The method of claim 86, wherein said interleukin is selected from the group consisting of IL-2, IL-12 and IL-15.